

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 05397 101001Z

43

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 5397

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SGEN, AORG, IR

SUBJECT: COMPOSITION OF DELEGATION TO WORLD CONFERENCE OF
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR(WCIWY)

REF: USUN 1722

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. LATEST WORD FROM GOI INDICATES
FOLLOWING ARE WCIWY DELEGATION FROM IRAN: PRINCESS ASHRAF,
MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLAN AND BUDGET ABDOL-MAJID MAJIDI,
AMBASSADOR MANOUCHEHR FARTASH, DEPUTY PERMREP TO U.N.
GENEVA MEHDI EHSASSI, MFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL
ORAGANIZATIONS GHOLAM-ALI SAYAR, WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION OF
IRAN(WOI) SECGEN MAHNAZ AFKHAMI, DEPSEC GEN OF WOI HOMA
AFZAL, ADVISOR TO WOI DR. HAMAYOUN POUI, WOI OFFICIAL
MRS. ELAHEH KASHANCHI, PROFESSOR AT TEHRAN UNIVERSITY
DR. MEHRI RASSEKH AND MS. SHAHKAR AND MS. TABATABAI. END
UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BIO DATA ON THREE PRINCIPAL DELEGATES FOLLOWS: BEGIN
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A. PRINCESS ASHRAF, SHAH'S TWIN SISTER, IS WELL
KNOWN TO USUN FOR HER CONTINUING ADVOCACY OF WOMEN'S
RIGHTS IN IRAN AND INTERNATIONALLY DURING HER
FREQUENT VISITS ABROAD. SHE IS ALSO KNOWN TO USUN AS
CHAIRPERSON OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND AS CHIRPERSON
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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 05397 101001Z

OF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR WCIWY. ALTHOUGH ASHRAF IS

NOT ESPECIALLY SKILLED MODERATOR, SHE IS REGARDED IN IRAN AS STRONG-WILLED, DETERMINED FIGURE OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE AT COURT. ASHRAF HAS FREQUENTLY ACTED AS SPOKESMAN FOR GOI POSITION ON VARIOUS UNGA ISSUES AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE OUTSPOKEN ADVOCATE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN MEXICO CITY.

B. ABDOL MAJID MAJIDI, MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLAN AND BUDGET ORGANIZATION, IS ONE OF HARD-WORKING WESTERN-TRAINED TECHNOCRATS AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO DESERVE CONSIDERABLE CREDIT FOR IRAN'S RECENT ECONOMIC GROWTH. HE HAD SERVED AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND MINISTER OF LABOR PRIOR TO HIS PRESENT APPOINTMENT AND HAD LONG CAREER WITH PLAN ORGANIZATION. HOWEVER, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE HE HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED INTEREST IN WOMEN'S AFFAIRS. AS MAJIDI COMBINES QUALITIES OF ASTUTE POLITICIAN AND CAPABLE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT EXPERT WE ASSUME HE WILL CONCENTRATE ON EXTRANEOUS POLITICAL/ECONOMIC MATTERS WHILE ASHRAF, AIDED BY HER COLLEAGUE MAHNAZ AFKHAMI, CONCERNS HERSELF WITH WOMEN'S AFFAIRS.

C. MANOUCHEHR FARTASH, AMBASSADOR TO U.N. ORGANIZATIONS, GENEVA, IS REGARDED BY HIS COLLEAGUES AS ONE OF BRIGHTEST OF YOUNGER GENERATION OF IRANIAN DIPLOMATS. FORMERLY UNDERSECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS HE IS FRENCH-EDUCATED WITH EXTENSIVE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE AND SEVERAL ASSIGNMENTS INVOLVING LEGAL AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. LIKE MAJIDI, FARTASH WAS NOT PREVIOUSLY KNOWN FOR HIS ADVOCACY OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

3. COMMENT: PRINCESS ASHRAF WILL BE ACTIVIST SPOKESMAN FOR IRANIAN DELEGATION ON ALL MATTERS PERTAINING TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO PLAY PROMINENT ROLE AT WCIWY. IRAN HAS GIVEN BROAD PUBLICITY AND SUPPORT TO CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR AND IS STRIVING TO DEVELOP IMAGE OF NATION IN WHICH POSITION OF WOMEN IS CONTINUALLY IMPROVING. HOWEVER, INCLUSION OF MAJIDI AND POSSIBLY FARTASH AMONG DELEGATION REINFORCES SUSPICION THAT IRANIANS INTEND TO DO SOME OPEC-RELATED POLITICKING DURING CONFERENCE. IN VIEW OF IRAN'S PIVOTAL POSITION
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 TEHRAN 05397 101001Z

WITHIN OPEC, ITS SUPPORT FOR NEW ECONOMIC ORDER CONCEPT, AND ESPECIALLY SHAH'S SUCCESS DURING RECENT STATE VISIT TO MEXICO IN CONVINCING PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA TO JOIN OPEC, WE FEEL IT UNREALISTIC TO HOPE THAT IRAN WOULD OPPOSE HOST GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO DISCUSS ISSUES SUCH AS CERDS AND NIEO. ON OTHER HAND, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT IRANIANS WOULD BE INTERESTED IN CONSIDERATION AT WCIWY OF RUSSIAN-SPONSORED PROPOSAL FOR TOTAL DISARMAMENT.

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